

MOTION BY SUPERVISOR MICHAEL D. ANTONOVICH

SEPTEMBER 15, 2009

With the imminent containment of the fires in and surrounding the Angeles National Forest, the County’s focus is now quickly shifting from fire control and suppression to damage assessment, repair and recovery.

County staff is already working diligently to re-open several County roads that remain closed due to the fire. Angeles Forest Highway, in particular, serves as a commuter route between Antelope Valley and the Los Angeles basin. Big Tujunga Canyon provides access to Big Tujunga Dam and other critical infrastructure.

County Public Works reports that the destruction is extensive. Destroyed or severely damaged in the fire were 95 guardrails, more than 800 road signs, 47 miles of roadway striping, and 850 burned roadway trees needing removal.

As the fire-fighting continued, our Public Works staff initiated inspections of critical flood control infrastructure to assess the damage. Vital upgrades and repairs to debris basins and roadway culverts are required to protect the public from anticipated storm and debris flows.

To date, Engineering Advice Teams have provided advice to about 80 residents within the City of La Canada-Flintridge and the unincorporated County area of La Crescenta. This outreach effort is continuing.

In the wake of the fire’s destruction, and in order to keep residents fully apprised of the recovery efforts, I have directed Public Works to expand its educational outreach efforts. It is essential that our staff alert and inform residents about and mudflow protection and safeguards.

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On September 8th, the Board of Supervisors adopted my and Supervisor Knabe's motion authorizing Public Works to negotiate and execute up to \$25 million in emergency contracts. This action will enable Public Works to restore access to residents and businesses and to prevent and reduce potential flooding and damage due to mudflows. As a follow-up to this action, I have initiated a dialogue between Public Works and the US Forest Service to establish and implement a comprehensive joint information and public outreach program. This program will be known as the Coordinated Agency Recovery Effort, or CARE.

CARE is a cooperative, inter-agency program that will include the transportation, flood, building code, and public relations components of the County's Department of Public Works, the US Forest Service (USFS), and the National Incident Management Organization (NIMO) as its core participants. Other Federal, State and local agencies will be added when applicable. CARE will operate from a dedicated location within Public Works' headquarters in Alhambra.

The goal of CARE is to disseminate information to residents, town councils, community organizations, elected officials, city managers, and other municipal staff relative to recovery and repair efforts. Communication will address our progress and identify on going potential hazards in the fires' aftermath. This will be achieved through media releases, bulletins, public service announcements, and the Public Works website.

In addition to traditional media outlets, CARE will utilize city newsletters and cable TV channels to disseminate information. This will include materials currently distributed by the Flood Control District relating to storm preparation and protection. CARE will develop unified and updated talking points together with a speakers bureau to be made available, if requested, to provide information at public and community meetings. I have already directed CARE managers to develop a schedule to appear before the regularly-scheduled meetings of all city councils and town councils impacted by the fire and its aftermath.

I, THEREFORE, MOVE that the Board of Supervisors direct the Director of Public Works to:

- Establish a Coordinated Agency Recovery Effort, or CARE, in conjunction with the United States Forest Service (USFS) and the National Incident Management Organization (NIMO);
- Provide dedicated office space and support within Public Works' headquarters building in Alhambra;

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- Initiate contact with other Federal, State, and local agencies, as deemed appropriate and necessary, in support of recovery and repair efforts;
- Develop a schedule of appearances before impacted city councils and town councils, to include representatives of both the Forest Service and County Public Works; and
- Develop a comprehensive public outreach program, including press releases, bi-weekly status reports, public appearances, and web-site postings.

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